



Your Asthma Review: How FeNO can help

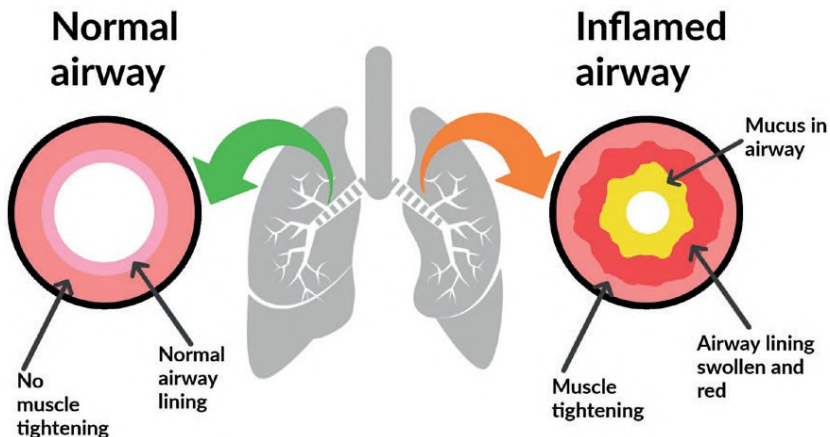
How can FeNO help me?

Everyone with asthma may benefit from having a FeNO test – even if your asthma does not currently bother you. FeNO can help your doctor or nurse better understand your asthma and choose **the best treatment for you to control your symptoms.**

It is natural to think you can feel whether your asthma is under control; however, the way you feel might not match how inflamed your lungs are.

Some people who feel their asthma is under control may in fact have inflamed lungs and not realise that they are at higher risk of having an asthma attack. Others may be receiving more treatment than they need.

FeNO is a test which can show whether your lungs are inflamed or not. This can be used to confirm whether your treatment is right for you – or whether you need more or less medication.



How can FeNO improve my treatment?

FeNO stands for fractional exhaled nitric oxide. It is measured using a simple breath test. Nitric oxide is a gas which everyone breathes out. **People with inflamed lungs breathe out more nitric oxide than people whose lungs are not inflamed.**

A recent national enquiry found that around half of people who had a severe asthma attack were previously thought to have mild or moderate asthma. However, it is more likely that these people were not getting the right treatment for their asthma.

Knowing your FeNO result can help you and your healthcare professional ensure that:

- 1** You have a *personalised* treatment plan which suits you and your asthma.
- 2** You are taking the right medications at the right doses to prevent you from having an asthma attack.
- 3** If you have good control, your treatment is reduced only if it is safe to do so.

A FeNO test result will always be considered along with your asthma history and symptoms.

How do I do a FeNO test?

Doing a FeNO test is safe and easy. It is different from doing a peak flow test, so you may need a bit of time to get used to it. If you don't get it first time, it is fine to try again.

It is safe to do a FeNO test even if you think you're having a bad day with your asthma. Your health care professional will talk you through what to do:

1

Firstly, breathe out all the way to empty air from your lungs

2

Next, seal your lips around the mouthpiece and breathe in deeply to fill up your lungs

3

Next, blow out steadily into the mouthpiece, as if you are blowing through a straw to make bubbles in a glass of water



You can take your medication and use your inhaler(s) as normal before doing the test.

Avoid being in a smoky environment for at least one hour before the test. If you smoke, avoid smoking for at least one hour before the test. Avoid eating nitrate rich foods (green leafy vegetables, beetroot) for at least one hour before the test. If you catch a cold, wait until you have recovered before having the test.



You can watch a short video on how to do the test here: <http://tinyurl.com/fenodemo>

What does my result mean?

Your FeNO result will show you whether or not your airways are inflamed.

Good results (24 or below) mean your airways are not inflamed.

- If your symptoms are well controlled then your result shows that everything looks good. It may be possible to safely lower the dose of your medication. If you feel this is right for you, talk to your doctor or nurse.
- If your symptoms are troubling you, you may need other types of treatment, such as medication to help open up your airways.



Higher results (25 or above) mean your airways are inflamed.

This can be because:

- The medication in your inhaler is not reaching your airways properly. Your doctor or nurse will be able to suggest ways to improve this. These may include trying a different type of inhaler that suits you better or changing the way you use your current inhaler.
- You need stronger medication to reduce the inflammation in your airways.
- You have hay fever or another allergy. Your health care professional can prescribe medication for this.

If any changes are made to the way you manage your asthma, your doctor or nurse will arrange to follow you up and have your FeNO checked again in a few weeks' time.

Once you and your doctor or nurse understand your FeNO result and what it means, you can decide together how to personalise the way you manage your asthma.

This document was designed by clinicians and researchers at the University of Oxford, University of Bristol, University of Bath, University of Southampton, and University of Nottingham as part of the DEFINE programme – www.define-study.com (Development and Evaluation of an online FeNO-guided asthma management INtervEntion in primary care)

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